

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners,
As a citizen who wants to be informed about the political and electoral issues that affect my life, I am greatly disappointed by the lack of informative television programming.

Local public affairs programming is virtually non-existent--constituting less than one half of 1% of all local programming. More than half of news broadcasts prior to the 2002 elections did not include a single campaign story. Our democracy is at risk when many Americans don't know basic facts about the candidates or the issues, as was the case in the 2000 elections.

Since broadcasters have clearly failed in their obligation to serve the public interest, the FCC should define meaningful public interest requirements that include local civic and electoral affairs programming. At a minimum, broadcasters should air three hours per week of local civic and electoral affairs programming, with at least two hours devoted to substantive election coverage in the six weeks prior to Election Day.

As the elections approach, a well-functioning democracy demands that citizens have access to a diversity of opinions and voices on the choices confronting us.

As you know only too well in this age of single syllable verbiage and 30 sec. sound bites, the public is becoming more and more singularly uninformed except thru the paid and negative ads of the political parties. It is the obligation of the broadcasting service to facilitate the education of people from all walks of life.

Please ensure meaningful and real coverage of the candidates and the issues during the next six weeks of this election period.

Sincerely,

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